

Appl. No. : 10/691,444
Filed : October 22, 2003

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments and the following remarks are responsive to the March 29, 2007 Final Office Action. Claims 1-18 remain pending in the present application, Claim 12 having been amended. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the above-captioned application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following comments.

Comments on Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging the allowability of Claims 1-11 and 13-16. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the allowability of the remaining pending claims in view of the amendments and remarks herein.

Claims 12, 17, and 18 Are Directed to Patentable Subject Matter Under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claims 12, 17, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Applicants respectfully traverse the present rejection. However, to expedite the prosecution of the present application, Applicants have amended Claim 12. Applicants also expressly reserve the right to further prosecute the original versions of Claims 12, 17, and 18 through continuation practice.

Applicants have amended Claim 12 to recite (emphasis added):

12. A method of detecting a reinforcing member within a laser-irradiated interaction region of a structure comprising a first material and the reinforcing member embedded in the first material, the method comprising:
focusing light from the interaction region during drilling by laser irradiation of the structure, the interaction region comprising the reinforcing member, and the light including light from a surface of the reinforcing member, the surface exposed during drilling;
separating the light into a spectrum of wavelengths;
analyzing at least a portion of the spectrum for indications of the reinforcing member within the interaction region; and
selectively adjusting the drilling in response to the indications, thereby avoiding substantially damaging the reinforcing member.

Amended Claim 12 is fully supported by the specification as originally filed, including but not limited to, paragraph [0138].

Applicants submit that amended Claim 12 recites, "selectively adjusting the drilling in response to the indications," which, together with other recitations of Claim 12, is a physical transformation and/or a useful, concrete, and tangible result. Accordingly, Applicants

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respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claim 12 and pass this claim to allowance.

Additionally, Applicants submit that Claims 17 and 18 also are directed to patentable subject matter, not only because they depend from Claim 12, but also on their own merit. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claims 17 and 18 and pass these claims to allowance.

SUMMARY

For the reasons described above, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the rejection of the claims and pass Claims 1-18 to allowance.

The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the rejections and objections in the case and to place the claims in condition for immediate allowance. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if any issues require clarification, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's attorney in order to resolve such issue promptly.

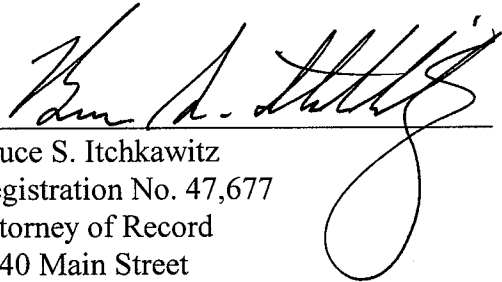
Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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